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Draft terms of reference for the Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation

Agreed text submitted by the Chairman of Drafting Group A

Pursuant to the consensus achieved at UNCTAD VIII, whereby: "States members of UNCTAD recognize that peace and prosperity are indivisible and that lasting peace and stability require effective international cooperation for the eradication of poverty",

Acting in the context of national and international efforts to combat poverty until it is eradicated,

A Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation is established by the Trade and Development Board with the following terms of reference:

1. To contribute to national and international efforts to prevent, alleviate and reduce poverty, particularly where it is more acute, as well as to the formulation of related national and international policies, bearing in mind the diversity of country situations including the particular problems of the least developed countries and the most vulnerable population groups. The work of the Committee shall be essentially action oriented.

2. In order to achieve the above objectives, the Committee shall:

(a) Review existing information and analyses on the characteristics, causes, location, dimensions and dynamics of poverty, as well as on related indicators.

(b) Exchange and review national experiences in dealing with poverty; identify impediments to poverty alleviation with a view to promoting greater understanding of successful national policies; and identify policy options for the prevention and alleviation of poverty.

In this context, the Committee, while taking into account the need for an integrated approach for efficient action towards poverty alleviation, shall focus, inter-alia, on the following areas: human resource and community development; social infrastructure development; employment creation and increasing productivity of the poor; distribution of income and social benefits of development in rural and urban areas; and social safety nets; and policies to promote the access of the poor to productive assets. In doing so, the Committee should bear in mind the impact of structural reform programmes on poverty alleviation and the need for increased participation of the poor and vulnerable groups in development.

(c) Exchange views on the impact of development assistance and cooperation programmes, including emergency assistance programmes, on the alleviation and reduction of poverty and develop approaches to promote effective programmes.

(d) Consider questions related to the financing and organization of social development programmes in developing countries, particularly in the areas of health, education, housing and sanitation.

(e) Examine the impact of trade expansion on poverty alleviation.

(f) Identify the linkages between the alleviation of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development.

(g) Examine the relationship between migrations and other demographic factors, and poverty alleviation.

3. In carrying out its functions, the Committee shall draw on the experience and expertise of other intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, experts from various fields and others for the purpose of discussion and clarification of issues on poverty alleviation.